How To Draw People
Cindy Wider

King Of The Land - Graphite and Charcoal on paper
Portrait Of A Voluntary Hero - Charcoal on paper
The Grandparents
The Old Rattler
Isha
Just Me
House Home Haven For The Newly Weds

A Woman and Her Cuppa
Portrait Of A Girl With No Name
Two Main Approaches to Drawing the Adult female figure;

1. **Internal Abbreviated form**
With this method, you are visualising the inside skeleton first, then recording what you see by drawing a stick figure. This method is particularly useful when drawing from life especially if you are trying to catch a figure in motion. You can use this method with a series of very rough and quick sketches. A great idea is to practice the stick figure in a standing pose at first, just to get to know the proportions of the eight head principle.

Idealised adult female at 8 heads high.

Note: The ideal proportions of a child at birth is around 3 1/2 to 4 heads tall and at 1 year is approximately 4 heads high, child of 3 years is 5 heads, 5 years 6 heads at 10 years 7 heads high. A child’s head grows very slowly, adding only 3 inches all together from the first year to adulthood. At 1 year a child’s head size is about 6” high, at 3 years 6 1/2”, at 5 years it is 7” and at 10 years it has grown to about 7 1/2” at 15 years it is an adult size at around 9” high.

When we draw children under ten we draw them a little shorter and more chubby than normal because it is considered more desirable and appealing in illustration.
Step one: using loose sketchy lines draw an oval shape for the head first.

Step two: sketch in the main curve of the spine from neck to tail bone.

Step three: place the major angles of the shoulders, waist and hips. Shoulders are placed about 1/4 of a head down from the head itself (the neck is in between this space).

Step four: fill in the main torso and hip ball area to make them solid shapes.

Step five: Add the legs, they are the same length as the distance from the hip line to the top of the head. There are two heads to the knees and two to the floor (tips of toes).

Step six: Add arms, the top part of the arm is slightly longer than the bottom part (see your own body if ever in doubt) and elbow usually comes to slightly above the waist. Elbow drops below the waist line when shoulder drops. Hand comes mid-thigh and also drops as shoulder drops.
Here are some examples of internal abbreviated form drawn as ‘Scribble Gestures’ created in less than 20 seconds without the pencil leaving the page. (inspired by the ideas presented in Mark Mitchell’s Course, see the last page his website.)
Internal Abbreviated form continued: Construction drawing

With this method, you are once again required to visualise the inside of the human body, however this time instead of limiting your vision to the skeleton alone, you are now visualizing the general mass of the muscles as well. The skin is then placed over the top in a final outline drawing.

The human body is mostly made up of a series of modified (altered) cylinders, spheres and cube shapes. Once you have successfully positioned these modified basic shapes on your page, the rest of the drawing is really quite simple and should all fall naturally into place. It’s all about getting the initial angles and proportions right. Many artists draw the stick figure construction first, then this type of frame on top of the stick figure before adding the outline and muscles last.
Internal Abbreviated form continued: Construction drawing
2. **External Abbreviated form**

With this method, you are required to visualise the outside of the human body in its most simplified form then draw the abbreviated contours. Look at the general mass of the muscles and overall movement of the body to do this successfully.
Introduction to Accents (with variation in line)

Accents are small marks drawn around the outlines of an object to indicate form. When we use accents we also draw the outline with varying degrees of widths (also known as variation in line or broken line.) For example, in some areas there is no need to draw any line whatsoever and we simply leave a small space or ‘gap’ in the outline drawing. This allows the viewer to make up the image in their mind and creates a more varied and interesting line other than the usual monotonous single line that we use for writing.

- Accents are small marks that are made around the outlines of a drawing.
- They replace the single hard outline.
- These small marks often taper at either end, travelling from thin to thicker and back to thin as well as from light to dark and back to light as they blend into the very soft outline of the drawing. (see Fig.3 & 4)
- They are placed strategically around the composition to also lead the viewer’s eye.
- Generally these marks are placed in places where the object begins to turn away from the light or recede back into the distance.
- Accents help your drawing to appear more interesting to your viewer and more realistic than a single solid and continual outline.
**Before and After Drawings by Students of this course**

The ‘before’ images presented here were completed prior to the student’s first week of tuition. The ‘after’ drawings were completed after studying this course for a total of approximately 63 hours over 21 weeks. People enter the course at all levels of ability and similar results are gained regardless of their level of ability to begin with. Most people who enter the course begin drawing at a twelve year old child level and rapidly progress to drawing professional-standard drawings like these.
Some great extra resources and free tutorials:

**Andrew Loomis:**
You will see some free tutorials on there and one in particular titled ‘Figure Drawing for all its worth.’ [http://illustrationage.com/2013/04/02/free-andrew-loomis-art-instruction-downloads/](http://illustrationage.com/2013/04/02/free-andrew-loomis-art-instruction-downloads/)

**Drawing Tutorials Online (Matthew Archambault):**
I am affiliated with this website and you can subscribe to it for a fee but they do also have a great free video tutorial if you sign up for their newsletter [http://www.drawingtutorials-online.com/index.cfm?affID=Drawpj](http://www.drawingtutorials-online.com/index.cfm?affID=Drawpj) I do consider this one to be one of the best sites on the internet for drawing the human body in a traditional fine art way. I love it and it’s extremely comprehensive.

**Drawspace.com (Brenda Hoddinott):**
Great free tutorials on many things to do with drawing people.


**How to draw hands:**

**How To Be a Childrens Book Illustrator (Mark Mitchell):**
[http://howtobearchildrensbookillustrator.com/drawingsecret/](http://howtobearchildrensbookillustrator.com/drawingsecret/) enter your name and email address to receive these fantastic free tutorials from Mark. Then consider enrolling into his course if you are interested in becoming a childrens book illustrator. This course is definitely the best of its kind on the internet. Mark shares his knowledge openly and freely with a wealth of information. There is also a really wonderful and warm online community to join in with here.

**Five Pencil Method (Darrel Tank):**
[http://www.fivepencilmethod.com/](http://www.fivepencilmethod.com/) one of the best websites for drawing portraits as fine art or for commissioned portraits, Darrel has a whole heap of free videos but his ‘How To Draw A Portrait’ dvd is outstanding. Consider purchasing the whole series, its really worth every bit. There is a massive bubbling online community here all cheering each other on.

**Water Colour Painting Techniques:**
[http://www.watercolorpaintingandprojects.com/](http://www.watercolorpaintingandprojects.com/) for a very comprehensive site on watercolour techniques all free too!